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COLE AND JOHNSON.

PREMIER EXPONENTS OF REFINED COMEDY.

Their Aim to Elevate Tone of Negro Theatrical Artists, and to Develop a Distinctive School of Race Melodies—History of the Afro American in Stage-Land.

It is not an extravagant statement to say that in no profession within the past decade has the evolution of the Negro been more strongly marked than in the arena of theatricals. The progress of the race upon the stage has been steady, continuous, and positive. The Negro performer, whether his forte be legitimate drama, musical comedy, monologue, minstrelsy, plantation act, or refined vaudeville sketch, has become a fixture behind the American footlights, and his merits are more and more substantially recognized by the keen-witted manager, in search of new forms of amusement for the theatre-going public.

Time was when the aspirations of Negroes were laughed at by the controlling powers of the stage. It was claimed that the black man's capacity for mimicry was crude, and that he would never acquire the intelligence necessary to impart to critical audiences the correct force of humor or to portray the fine points of character impersonation.

For years the race's talents were confined to jubilee melodies, and unpretentious concerts, with churches and halls as the scene of their exploits. Charles Collender was among the first to discover that the real Negro was the only true exponent of the ante-bellum type of the race, and he made a big fortune through many annual tours of his Original Georgia Minstrels. This was the entering wedge to a new departure. The field, then graced by but few who could boast of the proportions of a "star," was led by such well-known people as Sam Lucas, Billy Kersands, Tom McIntosh, James Bland, Wallace King, and the Hyers Sisters, flanked on the legitimate by the great Ira Aldridge, and in the musical arena by the Fisk Jubilee Singers, whose every appearance created a profound sensation.

With the success of these explorers, the ambition of the younger men was stirred, and the capital and adventurous spirit of Col. "Jack" Haverly, followed year after year with cumulative force, by W. S. Cleveland, Sam T. Jack, John W. Isham, Primrose and West, Nate Salisbury and others, brought to the surface the latent of the race to a degree that the most sanguine and the skeptical. The "coon" or "coon" performer, and the "walk," became the rage; captured the stage. The whites were compelled to their prejudice, and "top-line"

MEN OF THE HOUR.



DR. W. BRUCE EVANS,

The Energetic Principal of the Armstrong Manual Training School, Washington, D. C.—An Ardent Believer in the Remedial Influence of Hand-Training and Heart-Power.

the black-face specialties. This wave has, in large measure, subsided, but it endured long enough to polish a galaxy of rough diamonds, and bequeath to the permanent annals of the Thespian world a rich legacy in the shape of many refined and talented comedians, cultivated musicians, skilled dramatists and original song-writers, whose names have become household words in every section of the land.

Among these theatrical luminaries cast up on the shores of the mimic creation, Messrs. "Bob" Cole and Rosamond Johnson shine most resplendently. They are the composite result of years of natural development, by experience and observation. Their partnership, though not of long standing, has been a meteoric success in every particular, their conscientious and painstaking work eliciting unqualified approval at the hands of the severest critics, pleasing the most captious managers, and edifying audiences that applaud only that which is unusually meritorious. While bracketed as a firm and spoken of invariably as a unit, these two young men are wholly dissimilar in method, each possessing

an individuality peculiarly his own. One is a perfect foil for the other, yet there is an artistic unity in their work that blends them into one in a musical way.

Take up one of their compositions and you cannot tell what is Johnson's and what is Cole's. As a matter of fact, either one of them would have trouble in putting his finger on a special melody or a particular phrase and claiming it for his own. Generally Mr. Cole has the melodic idea, the thought in the rough, and Mr. Johnson works it up technically. But often the inspiration comes to Johnson. Each seems to have assimilated the creative talent of the other, Mr. John-

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E. L. Jordan, 915 9th street, n. w., retails the highest grades of beer and liquors. His place is the only one where you can get the famous Brighton Whiskey. One full quart \$1.00 delivery. Telephone 2878 main. Court-ous service and moderate prices.

THE GOSPEL OF WORK

ARMSTRONG MANUAL TRAINING SCHOOL DEDICATED.

Natural Development by Education of Head, Heart and Hand, the Central Thought in the Practical Address of Dr. Booker T. Washington—True Aid to the Negro Race.

Friday, October 24th, was a red letter day in the educational life of the District of Columbia.

It marked the formal dedication of the Armstrong Manual Training School, recently erected in Washington for the use of the colored children. While the building is occupied by the youth of our race, its influence is destined to extend beyond the confines of any particular people. Its kindly rays of utilitarian purpose and skill will most assuredly illumine this entire community, blessing the races alike by an improved and elevated citizenship.

HAMPTON AND TUSKEGEE.

It was especially significant that this manual training school, the most beautiful and complete of its kind in America for the education of Negro children should be launched upon its sacred mission by the race's most illustrious exemplar of solid achievement and apostle of industrial development, Dr. Booker T. Washington. It was still further a unique occasion in that this remarkable man, who came to dedicate a good temple of learning, bearing the honored name of General Samuel Chapman Armstrong, was himself a graduate of Hampton, a protégé of the philanthropic principal of that pioneer industrial institution, receiving there the inspiration that found concrete expression in the splendid school-city of Tuskegee. Nothing could have been more fitting, therefore, than that this broad open door to the useful arts should be a monument to the labors of General Armstrong, the father of industrial education, and that the orator of the day should be the logical heir-at-law to his mantle, the eloquent and practical "Wizard of Tuskegee." The school thus consecrated to a noble work by the voice of the living and the memory of the departed, is a result of the spirit generated and fostered in the largest degree by each.

THE BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT.

The Armstrong Manual Training School is a handsome and commodious structure, located on P street, between First and Third Streets, northwest, convenient to approach from all sections of the city. Its architecture is on the Italian renaissance lines, adopted to modern conditions. The material being buff-brick and stone. The building and site cost \$140,000, and the equipment, \$38,800, making a total of

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